

## Letter from Alexander Graham Bell to Mabel Hubbard Bell, September 31, 1896, with transcript

ALEXANDER GRAHAM BELL TO MABEL (Hubbard) BELL Beinn Bhreagh, C. B.  
Wednesday, September 31, 1896. Dear Mabel:

Mr. Kennan, Mr. McCurdy and I visited the artesian well this afternoon — followed by Mr. Ellis, John McKillop, Angus McKillop and one of the Matheson boys. It really looks as if there is a show of oil on the stuff now being removed from the boring. There is very little of it — and the appearance could be easily produced by any one desiring to deceive. Still I am inclined to think that the appearance is genuine. Mr. Kennan and Mr. McCurdy also seem convinced of it. The stream of water now proceeding from the boring is too small to repay the expense of boring — and Mr. McCurdy says that he will go on boring until something turns up to pay for the expense. If they get water in quantity — that would pay — if not — he will be satisfied with oil! or gas — or brine. So the boring will proceed. Mr. Harrington seems in earnest to push matters. On Monday they will recommence double shifts — men working day and night. Mr. Harrington said today — that he was afraid people would be talking about the matter and render it difficult to obtain oil leases — so he had his men round today — and he says they have secured oil leases on about fifteen thousand acres of land all round. Oil success to the enterprise!

Lina McCurdy and Ethel McKeen took dinner here today — spent afternoon on the mountain — and after supper — left for Baddeck to attend the Ladies' Club — and hear papers upon 2 Japan and etc.

Bessie Macrae was not at the laboratory yesterday. She has had some trouble with her teeth — and took cocaine (either internally or externally). The drug affected her so severely that Dr. McKeen was sent for. I believe that she has some trouble with her heart — at all events there was quite a scare in the family. I have not seen her — but as

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she appeared at the laboratory this morning I presume the matter did not turn out to be serious.

Mrs. Ellis and Bertha were to have left today for Washington but Mrs. Ellis was not at all well — and departure has been postponed for the present.

Mr. Barrington, the engineer of the Mayflower, has been digging a cellar under his new house — and report says that he has struck coal! Rather a convenient place to find coal isn't it?

Mr. Rhodes is evidently still a power in Matabeleland.

Although without official position — he went — unarmed — and with only three attendants — into the headquarters of the Matabele warriors. They wouldn't surrender to the armed forces of Great Britain — but they surrendered to him — personally! Rhodesia still lives.

Laboratory work crawls on — nothing specially new to report.

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President Warren's letter to you, on behalf of the Boston University, has been forwarded to Washington. I never was on a bust in my life — Do you want me to be after I am dead and gone.

As I can't think of anything else to say to interest you — Will close right here.

Your loving husband, Alec. Mrs. A. G. Bell, 1331 Conn. Ave., Washington, D. C.